



PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Ref. ID-02-218

Strasbourg, 16 April 2020

Mr Matjaž GRUDEN
Director
Directorate of Democratic Participation
Directorate General of Democracy
Council of Europe

Dear Mr Gruden,

I am writing you regarding alert n° 27/2020, published on the Platform to Promote the Protection of Journalism and Safety of Journalists on 9 March 2020 regarding a court case in Bulgaria for defamation against the Maltese blogger Manuel Delia and the Times of Malta.

Please allow me to convey to you the following information, provided by the authorities of the Republic of Bulgaria:

Based on the records of the Varna Regional Court, the case is initiated at a request of Hristo Georgiev vs Manuel Delia, based on article 45 of Bulgarian Law of Obligations and Contracts (“every person is obligated to redress the damage he has faultily caused to another person and in all cases of tort fault is presumed until otherwise proved”). The defendant is requested to pay the amount of 4 950 BGN (approx. 2 530 EUR) as a compensation to non-pecuniary damages, undermining the claimant’s honour and dignity, his good name in the society, his social circle and working environment and caused emotional discomfort due to defamatory statements made by the defendant in an article published on 22 October 2018 in the Internet blog www.maueldelia.com, named “Satabank: How I let them make me silent”.

On 25 March 2020, the defendant, Manuel Delia, submitted a motion on the lack of jurisdiction of the matter under the Bulgarian law.

Provided that the court finds no ground on the objection, the case will be scheduled for an open court hearing. One of the facts, that has to be proven, is whether the defendant has committed an unlawful act, consisting of dissemination of defamatory statements. This will be the focus of the decision of the judge.

As to this moment the case is still pending.

It needs to be underlined that this is an entirely private case that concerns two individuals.

No accusations are made by or submitted against the state authorities.

I would like to request your kind assistance in publishing the above information on the Platform, forwarding it to the relevant partner organisations and keeping me informed about their position and reaction.

I am looking forward to our future fruitful cooperation and remain at your disposal for any further clarifications.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Todorova', written in a cursive style.

Katya TODOROVA

Ambassador